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Students Celebrate Global Youth Service Day!

Global Youth Service Day (GYSD) is a way for youth worldwide to unite and celebrate youth activism, service, and leadership. This year, the seventh annual Global Youth Service Day (GYSD) occurred on the 21-23 of April. In Palestine, RI-SOL students from all schools were very active in developing GYSD activities, and several hundred students and community members benefited from our activities.

Complementing GYSD, RI-SOL's monthly GCEP topic for April was "Work in My Community." Instead of just focusing on one specific month, we wanted to make all of April focused on youth service and community participation. Among standout projects, on the eighth of April all students at Khawlah Bent Alazwar school took a half-day of classes, with the rest of the day spent cleaning the entire school from top to bottom. Meanwhile, another group of girls made a series of educational posters on how to keep their community clean and healthy. Last, another group of students also put on a play on their



Top and Bottom: Students in Ramallah participating in cleaning their school



school, and how to take care of the school and its environment, so all students can best benefit from it. As the goal of the day was most of all to have fun, students also brought home-cooked meals and enjoyed good times with friends.



About GCEP



The Global Connections and Exchange Project – Palestine is a project of Relief International - Schools Online's Global Citizenship & Youth Philanthropy Program and has been made possible with major funding from the United States State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Global Catalyst Foundation.

GYSD (cont. from page 1)

Further south, at Wedad in the Hebron district, students and teachers decided to make a regional impact. RI-SOL's OSM traveled with six teachers and ninety students during a field trip to the nearby town of Al-Arroub, and the students participated in a very excited about all the different service activities and RI-SOL is youth service, massive cleaning of the city's green areas. In addition, students and teachers at both Wedad and Huda schools in Hebron participated cleaning their schools.

Students were very excited to

participate and RI-SOL is proud to declare the projects a success. Of course, volunteerism should not only limit itself to the month of April, but should continue year-round. To this end, RI-SOL has collaborated with Youth Service America, identifying youth leaders in its schools and pairing them up with IT mentors" in the US selected by YSA. The two groups of youth will collaborate online via RI-SOL's forums for GCEP and work together to identify follow-up and more sustainable service projects, in order to turn community service into an everyday activity.



Students helping to clean the gardens of Al Arroub

RI-SOL Announces the Winner of the First Annual International Women's Day Photo Essay Contest

First celebrated in 1909, International Women's Day has become an internationally recognized holiday honoring women's role in society. IWD is the story of ordinary women as makers of history; it is rooted in the centuries-old struggle of women seeking to participate equally in society on an equal footing with men. When women on all continents, often divided by

national boundaries and by ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic and political differences, come together to celebrate their Day, they can look back to a tradition that represents at least nine decades of struggle for equality, justice, peace and development. In many countries, including the United Kingdom, India, and the countries of the former Soviet Bloc, International Women's Day is even a public holiday.

In conjunction with the United Nations and the rest of the world's recognition of IWD, RI-SOL was proud to hold its first annual photo essay contest in honor of the day. Students in several countries participated in RI-SOL's contest, and in Palestine we received many submissions, making it difficult to choose a winner.

After a long deliberation process, RI-SOL is proud to announce the winner of this year's IWD Photo Essay Contest as Esa Al-Titi, a 9th grade student from Huda school in the city of Hebron. Esa submitted a series of pictures of his grandmother collecting herbs in his family's garden, and his pictures were selected because of their representation of the everyday, often overlooked roles played by women in society.

We were very pleased and excited over the volume of submissions we received, and look forward to more contests and photo events throughout the year!

*IWD is the story of
ordinary women as the
makers of history*



Esa, joking around in Huda School's ILC

**Winning
photo, RI-
SOL's
International
Women's Day
Photo Essay
Contest, by
Esa al-Titi,
Huda School,
Hebron.**



RI-SOL Arranges First-aid Training with Palestinian Red Crescent for Students

On the April 1st, RI-SOL and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) agreed to conduct two first-aid training courses for 30 students, 15 each from Alhashemya Secondary Boys School and Khawlah Bent Alazwar Secondary Girls School. The two groups of students started training on the 16th of April. The course totaled 21 hours of training and focused on first-aid treatments such as CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation), bone fractures, bleeding, and treatment of insect or animal bites, as well as the differences between first-aid treatments for an adult, a child, and an infant.

At the end of the training course the students took two exams, one written and one practical. All 30 students from both schools successfully passed the exams, and will receive a certification in beginner's first-aid training. In addition, the students are eligible to volunteer with the PRCS, both in hospitals and even in ambulances. Many students were very interested and excited at the prospect of

spending some of their free time this summer volunteering with the PRCS, and, of course, especially excited about working in ambulances!



A student from Alhashemya practices CPR

Huda School Gives Training to Students from Nearby School

This month, RI-SOL's OSM at Huda School in Hebron received a request from the nearby Abu El Dalaat Girls' School to see if their girls could receive IT training from Huda. Of course, RI-SOL's OSM and Huda school were glad to accept the request to provide training for the local school students. 40 students came to their school with their technology teacher to receive basic internet training. The students were very excited and grateful for the opportunity to use the internet for the very first time.



On the 5th of April, 4 teachers from Alhashemya secondary school attended a basic computer training headed by RI-SOL's OSM. The training consisted of 8 sessions, conducted during the teachers free time after school. The four teachers taught math, chemistry, Arabic, and religion classes.

The training covered the basics of computer use, such as Microsoft Windows, Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel), Internet Explorer, and how to create and use an email account.

Teacher
Training
At
Alhashemya
Secondary
School

Students in Hebron Connect with Palestine Polytechnic University

An important part of education is not just becoming familiar with one's current school, but also where that education will lead, and what doors may be opened. This month, students from Huda Abdul Nabi School in Hebron were introduced to the nearby Palestine Polytechnic University by attending two events at the school.

The first event the students attended was an art exhibit of work by graphic design students at the university. PPU invited the students to the exhibit, and Huda school chose 40 of the most interested and involved students from 8th, 9th, and 10th grades to attend. The university students introduced students from Huda to their artwork and how they work in their courses

in the university.

In addition, the following day, students were also invited to attend an Open Day at PPU's College of Engineering. Fifteen students attended the Open Day, which was open to visitors young and old from the community. The students were introduced to the different fields of engineering and held a discussion with the engineering students on topics such as what the different types of engineers do and what they can do with their education.

In both events, students were very excited to see where their education, especially the computer and IT skills they have learned in RI-SOL's ILC at Huda School. Students were eager to see how their

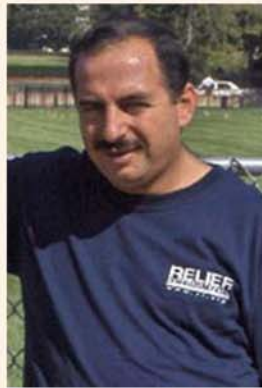
older university counterparts worked, and for many, it was the first opportunity to visit an institution of higher learning.



Boys from Huda school viewing the graphic design exhibit at PPU

Teacher from Huda School Selected as State Department Alumni of the Month!

This month, the State Department honored Anwar Khairy Al-Mohtaseb, a teacher from Huda School in Hebron and a participant in RI-SOLs Global Connection and Exchanges in the West Bank and Gaza, as Exchange Program Alumni of the Month. In September 2005, Anwar participated in RI-SOL's four-week teacher exchange to the United States. This exchange program, which was hosted at the University of California, Los Angeles, focused on integrating computer technologies into education, curriculum development and interactive teaching methodologies. Anwar said of his exchange experience, "our visit to the States was a great chance for us to explore the American society and educate our American friends about our country."



Anwar Mohtaseb

In addition to his experience during the exchange, Anwar was selected for his history of involvement with civil society and peace-building initiatives. Anwar volunteers with several peace-promoting NGOs in the West Bank, including the [International Peace & Cooperation Center](#). IPCC is a non-profit organization that develops proactive initiatives that support the social, cultural, political and economic processes essential to a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future for the Palestinian people. In 1999, Anwar became a mediator at the Jerusalem Mediation and Arbitration Center, which is a joint Israeli-Palestinian

organization that deals with inter-group conflicts in Jerusalem. As a mediator, Anwar travels between two disputing parties to identify common ground on which to build a peaceful agreement.

In 1980, Anwar received a scholarship to study English Literature at Qatar University in Doha, Qatar. He graduated in 1985. He then moved to Bahrain to work as an editor with the Arabic weekly magazine, Sada Al-Usbou. In 1987, he began working with Dammam Industrial Institute/Saudi Arabia, where he remained until the Persian Gulf War began in 1991.

It was the Persian Gulf War that inspired his peace efforts in the region. "The Iraqi war on Kuwait was a bitter disappointment to me," he said. "At that moment I reached the conclusion that peace...is a necessity for all nations worldwide," Anwar said.

Anwar says that his father was important in shaping his views on peace and conflict, introducing him to the works of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., among others.

His position as a teacher allows him to teach a new generation about human rights and fundamental freedoms. "I believe that education should promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further our mission to spread peace." Since his return from the exchange, in addition to teaching English and computers at Huda Boys school in Hebron, (one of RI-SOL schools in Palestine), Anwar has also been asked by Huda School to help design [Huda School's English website](#)

Staff Profile: Fatima Khalil

We would like to introduce a new section in our newsletter, highlighting our staff in Palestine. Each month we will introduce a different member of our RI-SOL family.

Since this month we covered International Women's Day we thought it would be appropriate to select a staff member who is also a working mother. Fatima Khalil is the Finance and Administrative Officer of our main office in Ramallah. After spending all day monitoring the accounting for our projects and keeping our office in order, she goes home from the office and begins her job as a mother, taking care of her two children, Neda' and Baha'. Even though she was married at the very young age of 18 she insisted on continuing her studies. She finished high school with a very high grade on her exit examinations. After high school she entered Birzeit University, which is



⇒ Staff Highlight (Cont. from pg. 5)

one of the most prestigious universities in Palestine, where she earned her BA in financial management in 2003. Of course, she wants to continue her studies and to earn her CMA (Certified Management Accountant) certificate. While we have chosen Fatima for the month of April, we have more than ten staff members working all over Palestine, and will be covering a different staff member's work every month, so please keep reading!

Forum Highlights: Students Engage in Online Discussions About Volunteerism in Their Communities

The online collaborative project for April was themed "Work in My Community." As part of this theme, students explored what it means to be a volunteer and looked at their own motivations for volunteering. In addition, they set up their own volunteer projects and saw the effects that volunteerism can have on the community. Last, a few student leaders were selected to work online with mentors in the United States to set up long-term volunteer efforts at their schools.

We want to talk today about the activities that will be performed in our school for GYSD. First thing we are going to do a special day cleaning the school on April eighth and all of the girls are going to help each other. The second thing we're going to do a dolls play about health so that the girls of the school can enjoy the play and at the same time they will get important information about health, and we're going to hang drawings about the same issue. This is the plan that we have in our school and we are interested in knowing what the other countries are going to do.

- Aseel & Fatin, Khawlah Bent Alazwar, Ramallah

My class is still working on planning our community service project but I believe that we are going to try to clean up the campus (the area around our school). But at our school, the junior class (11th grade) is doing 2 class community service projects this year also. For this project, we went and visited the elderly in a senior citizen home (a home for older people who cannot take care of themselves.)

- Kelsey Taylor, St Mary's Ryken

I'm from Widad school, I went on Thursday with the health committee in our school in voluntary work to khadeaja school and we made a blood test of the students for the knowledge of the blood type and we watched the rest of the proceedings on the occasion of the International Health Day.

- Mays, Wedad Naser Adden, Hebron

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